(d) The Government has put in place various policies to promote broad based industrial growth, which includes, *inter-alia*, delicensing of industrial capacity, liberalization of foreign trade regime to provide better access to inputs at competitive prices, rationalization and reduction in duty rates of customs and central excise, better infrastructure support, and liberal FDI regime, etc. In the Budget 2008-09, the Government has also reduced the excise duty across the board from 16% to 14% to boost the domestic demand for the manufacturing industry.

In addition, Government has also announced several measures to assist and promote export oriented industries affected by the rupee appreciation, which includes enhancement of the Duty entitlement Pass Book (DEPB); reduction in Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) premium by 10%; enhancement of the rates of duty drawback; interest subvention of pre-shipment and post-shipment credit, refund of service tax; raising the revenue ceiling for Vishesh Krishi and Gram Udyog Yojana etc.

Old forts in the grip of Maoists

*293. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that grand forts associated with the warrior-ruler in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, namely Rohtas Fort and Kalinjar Fort respectively, are in the grip of Maoist extremists as reported in the media;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such old forts which are tourist attraction are in the grip of Maoists and neither the Union Government nor State Governments have taken any steps to get them free from the clutches of Maoists; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) According to available information, these forts are not in the grip of Maoists.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Setting up of Vocational Training Institutes for women

*294. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has set up Vocational Training Institutes to cater to the vocational training needs exclusively for women in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is also a proposal to set up such an institute in various part of the country particularly in Tamil Nadu;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the time by when the said institute is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Various States/UT Governments have set up 264 Government Women ITIs, 95 Private Women ITCs, 685 Women Wings in Government ITIs and 108 Women Wings in Private ITCs having a total of 49,336 training seats.

In addition, Ministry of Labour & Employment has set up 1 National and 10 Regional Vocational Training Institutes for women in different States.

(c) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government of India.

There are already 12 Government ITIs, 12 Private ITCs for women and 3 women training wings in general ITIs in Tamil Nadu. Apart from this, 30% seats are also reserved for women in general ITIs/ITCs in Tamil Nadu. The total seating capacity in women ITIs/wings is 2568.

(d) The existing seats reserved for women in Tamil Nadu are not fully utilized and, therefore, Government of Tamil Nadu does not have any proposal to set up a new women training institute.

(e) Does not arise.

Closing down of weaver cooperative societies in A.P.

*295. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 390 weaver cooperative societies out of a total 1412 societies in the State of Andhra Pradesh have closed down recently because of the loan and interest burden on the weavers;

(b) if so, whether any relief measures are taken up for implementation to help the weaver cooperative societies to come out of distress;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) how much of the outstanding loan and interest, which is to the tune of Rs. 52 crore in the State, would be waived; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) According to the information provided by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, it is not correct that 390 weavers cooperatives societies out of a total 1412 societies in the State of Andhra Pradesh have closed down recently because of the loan and interest burden on the weavers.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) A committee headed by Managing Director, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) was formed by this Ministry to look into the problems of high cost of working capital and choking of credit lines in the handloom sector. The committee prepared a Financial Package in this regard whose proposals *inter-alia*-include;

i. Cleansing of the balance sheet of Apex and Primary Weavers Cooperative Socieities (Viable and potentially viable) with adequate fund support from Government.